

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO. 25X1A

COUNTRY Burma

SUBJECT Young Men's Buddhist Association

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1. Before World War II, the Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA), with headquarters in Rangoon, had many branches in Burma, and was in contact with YMBA organizations in Ceylon and Thailand. In Burma at that time, the YMBA, along with Rangoon University, supplied practically all of Burma's pre-war leadership.
2. Today, only the headquarters branch in Rangoon is functioning. Lay leaders in various Burmese cities have requested aid in reestablishing YMBA branches; and the leaders in Rangoon are eager to expand the organization to combat Communism, to raise moral standards lowered by war and insurrection, and to combat the superstitions which have crept into the religion and led educated young Burmans to reject Buddhism as an "old women's religion."
3. The Rangoon YMBA leaders are, however, in many cases, prominent people too preoccupied with their regular jobs to spend time in advancing the YMBA.
4. There are about 400 members in the headquarters branch at present. Dues are one rupee per month per member. This money is consumed largely in the maintenance of the building and the library. The organization has no full time secretary.
5. The headquarters organization consists of a president; three vice-presidents; a secretary and a treasurer; an executive council; and five committees: sports, education, religious, library, and finance and administration.
6. Justice U OHN PE is the president of YMBA and some of the other leading members are U THAN MYAT, leading Buddhist philosopher and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; U KUN ZAW, former Director of Labor and now a merchant; U HLA THEIN, a leading Rangoon lawyer and the Secretary of the Supreme Buddhist Council; U SHU MAUNG, Chief Judge of the District Court; and U CHAN H'OOON, Attorney-General for the Government of Burma.
7. THAKIN MU and many other prominent Burmese are also interested in reestablishing the YMBA.

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